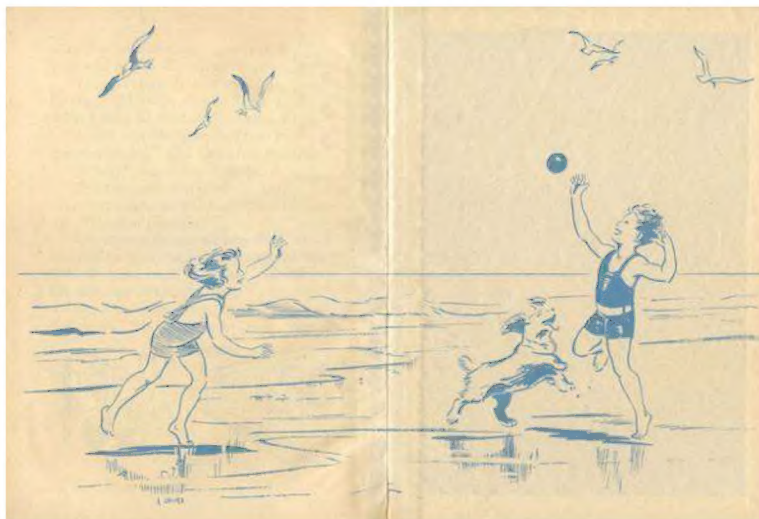


AT SEASIDE COTTAGE

by **ENID BLYTON**

ILLUSTRATED BY
EILEEN A. SOPER





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Part

1 
7

Part

2 
28


Part

3 
44


At Seaside Cottage


Part 1

IT was summer time. The sky was blue and the sun shone down. Peter was lying on the grass with Janet beside him.

I m so hot I'm sure I'm going to melt,' said Peter.

'We can't take off any more of our clothes,' said Janet. 'We've only got bathing costumes on as it is!'

'I wish we were by the sea,' said Peter, rolling over on his front. 'Oh, Janet, think of it! Little waves rolling up the beach, golden sand to dig in, lots of bathing, and perhaps a boat to go sail ing in!'

'Woof!' said a voice suddenly, and there came the sound of scampering feet. Then a golden spaniel flung himself on the two children, bark ing madly.

'Oh, Scamper!   Get off my middle,' cried

Janet. The dog at once jumped on to Peter, who squealed.

'Scamper! Stop licking my ear! Oh, what a wet tongue you've got. Stop kissing me, you silly dog! I shall have to get a towel in a minute!'

'Woof!' said Scamper, and licked Peter's nose instead.

Peter took hold of one of the spaniel's long ears. 'If you don't stop licking me, I won't let go your ear!' he said. 'What's made you so excited today?'

'He looks as if he has some good news for us, doesn't he?' said Janet. 'Scamper, tell us what it is!'

'Woof!' said Scamper, and shook his ear free. Then he galloped off up the garden. Peter sat up.

'What *is* the matter with him? Oh, there's Mummy. *She* looks pleased about something too. Hallo, Mummy!'

Mummy came down the garden with Scamper jumping up and down beside her. She was smiling.

'Well, children,' she said. 'I've got something



nice to tell you. We're all going for a holiday by the sea!

'Mummy! We were just saying how we wished we were by the sea!' said Janet.

'And we *knew* Scamper wanted to tell us some good news!' said Peter. 'When are we going?'

'Tomorrow,' said Mummy. 'So you will have to come and help me to pack at once. Granny has invited us to stay with her in her cottage at Sandy Cove.'

'Oh!' cried the children in delight, and they got up and began to run round just as madly as Scamper.

'I love Granny's cottage. The sea comes almost to her back gate,' cried Peter.

'Scamper, you've never even *seen* the sea. You'll love it.'

'Woof!' said Scamper, quite agreeing.

They all set off to the house to pack, chatter^{ing} at the tops of their voices.

'I shall take my ship.'

'I'm glad my doll has a bathing costume. She'll love to wear it.'

'Woof! Woof!'

'Don't let's forget to take some balls to play with on the sand.'

'Woof!'

'Oh, Mummy, isn't it lovely? I feel so ex^{ci}ted!'

All the packing was done by the evening. Daddy came home with the train tickets, and even Scamper had a dog-ticket. He felt very proud.

Everyone was excited the next day. Janet said she couldn't possibly eat any breakfast, so Scamper ate her sausage because Mummy said it couldn't be left in the larder. Scamper thought that was a very good beginning to a holiday - a whole sausage at once!

'Here's the taxi, quick, it's at the door!' shouted Peter suddenly. The taximan went to help Daddy with the luggage. Soon it was all in the taxi.

Daddy went all round the house to make sure that every window was closed. Then he slammed the front door and got into the taxi with the others.

'We're off!' he said. 'No, Scamper, sit on the



floor, please. You really can't sit on my knee.' 'I hope we're in time for the train,' said Peter. 'Oh, Mummy, wouldn't it be awful if we didn't catch it!'

'We could get the next one, silly,' said Janet. 'Look - here we are at the station already. Mummy, there's a train in. Oh quick, in case it's ours!'

They all got out of the taxi, and at that very moment the train began to pull slowly out of the station.

'It's all right,' said Daddy, seeing the children's alarmed faces. 'That's not our train. It's going the wrong way!'

They went into the station. It was an exciting place. A goods train came in and the children counted the trucks behind it.

'It's got thirty-four trucks to pull!' cried Peter. 'The most we've ever counted! Oh, Mummy, hadn't I better put Scamper on the lead in case he

gets on the line? He will keep going to the edge of the platform.'

'Look - the signal's set to show our train is coming!' cried Janet. 'I can just see it coming. Yes, it's our train!'



So it was. It came rushing into the station, and poor Scamper was so frightened that he tried to get under a pile of luggage and hide.

'He thinks it's some kind of great big dog coming to eat him,' said Janet. 'Come on, Scamper - get in!'

They all got into an empty compartment. The children knelt up at the windows on opposite sides. Scamper got under the seat. He was still frightened.

The train began to move very slowly, and the children shouted with joy. 'We're moving! We're off to the sea!'

'Look, we can see our back garden!' cried Janet. Scamper came from under the seat and jumped up by her to look. 'See, Scamper, there is the cat next door. Wave your paw to her!'

It was great fun going in the train. There was such a lot to see from the windows. There were fields of cows, winding rivers with bridges over them, lots of back gardens, some neat and tidy, some badly-kept and full of weeds. There were dark tunnels to go through, high bridges to go over, and stations to stop at. The children couldn't think how Daddy and Mummy could





sit and read when there was so much to be seen from the windows.

'Soon be there now,' said Daddy, after a long time. 'Look out for the first sight of the sea, children. You will see it after the next station.'

And so they did! Janet gave a squeal that made everyone jump. 'Oh look! I can see the sea, like a blue line over there! Look, Scamper, that's the sea!'

'Woof!' said Scamper, looking at a cat on a wall. He didn't know in the least what the sea was like.

'Next station's ours,' said Daddy, beginning to collect the bags off the rack.

The train came to a full stop at the next station, and couldn't go any farther because the line ended there. The children tumbled out of the carriage excitedly. They were at the sea at last!

'There's Granny! And Grandpa! Granny, we're here!'

Granny hugged them all, and patted Scamper. 'Welcome to Sandy Cove!' she said. 'Let the porter bring the luggage. We can walk, it's so near.'

The sun shone down from a lovely blue sky. When the children turned the first corner they cried out in delight.

'The sea! Oh, look at all the sparkles on it. Grandpa, is the tide in or out ?'

'Going out,' said Grandpa. 'You'll be able to dig in the sand all afternoon. Well, well, it's nice to have you here. Now I shall be able to have somebody to take me out on the big steamer. Granny won't come with me, because she's afraid of being sick!'

'We'll come, Grandpa! We'd love to,' said the children, and Scamper ran round and round them, getting in everyone's way, he was so excited.

'Oh, can we go down on the sands now, this very minute?' asked Janet. 'They do look so lovely.'

'Wait till after dinner,' said Granny. 'I'm sure you must be very hungry. I've got a nice lunch waiting for you.'

'What is it?' said Janet, suddenly feeling hungry.

'Cold meat, salad, and potatoes in their jackets,' said Granny.

'And lots of ice cream for a pudding,' added Grandpa.

'Our very favourite dinner!' said Peter, and he rushed on ahead to Granny's little cottage.

It was a pretty one, set right by the sea. The back garden ran down to the beach, and a little white gate led on to the sands.

'Has the sea ever come into your back garden?' asked Janet.

'Oh, yes. It often does in the winter,' said Granny, pushing open her little front gate. 'Now, welcome to Seaside Cottage, all of you. I hope you will have a lovely time here.'

'We shall, we shall!' said Peter, and gave her such a hug that he almost lifted her off her feet.

Soon they were all sitting down to dinner. How hungry they were! 'I've got my seaside appetite already,' said Peter. 'I could eat my dinner all over again!'

'You can't possibly eat any more, Peter,' said Mummy. 'Now, go up to your room, both of you, and get into your shorts and sandals. Then you can

go-straight out on to the beach.'

It wasn't long before Peter, Janet and Scamper were running down Granny's back

garden, through the little white gate, and out on to the yellow sands. They all danced about like mad things. 'We're at the seaside! Our holiday's only just beginning! Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!'

'Woof, woof, woof!' barked Scamper at the top of his voice.

'Come down to the water and see the sea, Scamper,' said Janet. 'Come along. We'll run right down to the very edge.'

So off they all went, but when Scamper really saw the sea, stretching away blue and smooth for miles and miles, he was frightened. And when a wave ran up and caught his paw, he barked in fright.

'It's all right, Scamper. The sea won't eat you,' cried Peter. 'Come on, let's paddle.'

And in went the two children, their toes loving the feel of the warm water and soft sand. They paddled till the water came above their knees. The little waves splashed round them, and soon Scamper forgot to be afraid and came bounding in the sea after them.

'Oh, Scamper! You'll have to swim if you come out much deeper,' cried Peter. 'And we none of us have learnt to swim yet.'



'Oh, look! Scamper can swim! He's swim~~ing~~ing beautifully. Look how he uses all his legs at once!' called Janet. 'Peter, how does he know how to swim? He hasn't had a single lesson.'

'Dogs don't need to be taught,' said Grand~~pa~~pa's voice, from the edge of the sea. 'But chil~~dren~~dren do. You must learn while you are here, and as soon as you can both swim six strokes we'll go on the steamer!'

What fun the children had that first day! They dug a big castle, with Grandpa helping. They made a wide moat round it for the sea to fill. They decorated it with seaweed and shells. They went to buy a little flag to put on the top. It did look a lovely castle.

'Sit on it with Scamper, Janet,' said Peter. 'Let the tide come right up.'

'It won't be up till after tea,' said Grandpa. 'Look, here comes Mummy with a picnic tea.'

Tea was lovely. They all had it sitting on the sands. Scamper upset Janet's milk, and ate Granny's bun when she wasn't looking, but otherwise

he was a very good dog.

'Now the tide's coming up, look,' said Grandpa. 'Go and sit on the castle with Scamper, Janet.'

So off they went, and soon Janet was proudly sitting on the very top, waving the little Union Jack, while Scamper growled fiercely every time a wave came too near. When one actually dared to touch the castle he barked very angrily indeed. 'Woof, woof! Woof, woof!'

A big wave came up and washed right round

At Seaside Cottage - Part i

the castle. Janet gave a squeal. 'Oh, the castle is going. I felt it!'

Another wave came. Scamper barked so furiously that Granny felt quite alarmed. Then a still bigger wave came, and Janet had to stand up in case she was washed away with the castle!

'That was fun!' she said, wading back to shore. 'Come on, Scamper. Good dog! I'm sure you must have made the waves feel very frightened.'

It was lovely going to bed in the little room under the roof, at Granny's cottage.

'I like this ceiling, don't you, Janet?' said Peter. 'It's not straight like ours at home. It comes slanting down almost to the floor. Oh, I do like being here!'





At Seaside Cottage

Part 2

IT was lovely waking up the next morning. The children could hear the sound of the sea, and they could hear the seagulls calling.

'It sounds as if they're laughing,' said Janet, jumping out of bed and going to the window. 'Get up, Peter. The sea is as blue as cornflowers !'

Grandpa gave them their first swimming lesson that day. He was very good and patient with them. He had to be quite stern with Peter, though, because he was afraid that Grandpa would let go his hold of him and drop him under the water

'Now don't be silly! You can trust me when I say I shan't let you go under the water. Watch Janet! She is much better than you are, and you are seven, a whole year older!'



Then Peter went red, and tried harder.

'Very good,' said Grandpa 'You are doing the arm strokes better now. My word, you'll soon be able to swim after all. Then we'll go on the steamer.'

Daddy made them run about and play ball on the sands after they had bathed, to get them nice and warm. Scamper loved that. He always fetched the ball when it ran into the water.

But sometimes he didn't want to give it back to the others. He would run off down the beach with the ball, and make the children chase him for miles.

The weather was so lovely that they had all their meals, except breakfast, out of doors. The children got brown after two days in the sun, and they ate so much that Granny really thought she had better give them five meals a day!

'Let's go shrimping this evening,' said Grandpa, and he went out and bought three shrimp-ing nets. Then they went shrimping in the shallow sandy edge of the sea.

'I've got five at once!' cried Janet in delight.

'And I've got eight!' called Peter. 'Grandpa, did you catch any that time?'



'Only two,' said Grandpa. 'We shall soon get our baskets full!'

Granny cooked the shrimps for supper. The children ate them with brown bread and butter. They were delicious.

'I do want to go and explore the rock pools,' said Janet, one day. 'Can we, Granny?'

'Of course. But go at low tide, dear, because they get very deep at high tide,' she said.

So Peter and Janet went to the blue pools that lay between the seaweedy rocks. Peter took his boat to sail on one pool. 'Look!' he called to Janet. 'She sails beautifully!'

They climbed about all over the rocks when they had sailed Peter's boat. And suddenly Janet slipped on the seaweed!

'Help!' she cried.

But before Peter could turn round, she had slid backwards into a deep pool. Splash! In she went, and the water went right over her head as she sat down in the pool.

Peter dragged her up, gasping and choking. She began to cry.

'Don't cry,' said Peter. 'Let's go back and tell Mummy all about it.'

He took Janet back to Mummy. Daddy laughed when Janet told him what had happened. And then Janet began to laugh too.

'I expect I looked funny,' she said.

Then suddenly Peter looked alarmed. 'My boat! We left it on the pond! Oh, I do hope nobody has taken it. I wonder if I shall know which pool it is.'

He ran off to get his boat. But soon he was back, looking very upset. 'I can't find my boat. It's gone. Somebody must have taken it.' 'Look! What's Scamper got?' said Mummy suddenly. They all looked round. Scamper was trotting towards them from the rock pools, and

in his mouth he had Peter's boat!

'Oh, you clever dog!' cried Peter in delight.

'You found it for me. Scamper, you're the best dog in the world. Can I buy him an ice-cream, Mummy? He does so love them.'

So Scamper had an ice-cream all to himself.



Another day, Grandpa gave Daddy and the two children a great treat. He paid Jock the fisherman to take them out in his fishing-boat to fish!

Jock's boat had a sail. It was a red one and looked lovely against the blue sky. Jock took down his sail and threw out the anchor when they were far enough out.

'Now here's where we'll get plenty of fish,' he said. 'Here's a line for you, Peter, and one for you, Janet.'

Janet caught two fish, and Peter caught three. Grandpa caught six, and Jock caught eight.

'A very fine afternoon's work,' said Jock with a grin that showed all his white teeth. 'Now, up with the sail and we'll be off back to the shore. You'll have some nice fried fish for your supper tonight!'

The wind filled the red sail, and the boat sped back to Sandy Cove. Janet and Peter each had a turn at the tiller. They felt very grand to be able to hold the little boat on her course.

'When I'm grown up I shall have a boat just like this for my own,' said Peter.

'What will you call her?' asked Janet 'Jock's boat is called *Saucy Sue*.'

'Then I'll call mine *Cheeky Janet*, after you,' said Peter, and that made everyone laugh.

As they came near the shore Peter saw the high cliffs farther along the cove.

'Are there any caves there?' he asked Jock. 'What? Along there in those cliffs?' said Jock. 'Oh yes. Plenty of them. You should go and explore them, but mind you do it when the tide's out or you'll get caught inside. The water comes right up to them round along there.'

'Oh Daddy - can Janet and I go and explore the caves tomorrow?' asked Peter. 'Do say yes!'

We might find some smugglers' caves. Mightn't we, Jock?

'Well, there's no knowing,' said Jock, his bright blue eyes twinkling at them. 'They do say there were smugglers here a hundred years ago.'

The very next day Peter and Janet set off to explore the caves. They took Scamper with them, of course, and he raced along beside them, barking at any gull that dared to come and walk on the beach.

It was quite a long way round the cove to the cliffs where the caves were. The first cave was small and low. The next one was bigger but it didn't go very far into the cliff. But the next cave looked a likely one. It ran

right back into the cliff and had a very sandy floor, clean and smooth. Peter had brought his torch with him and he switched it on.

'Look, Janet! There's an archway here at the back of this cave, and I do believe it goes right back into another cave. Let's go, shall we?'

So they went through the archway and came into another cave, very dark and seaweedy.



'Let's play here,' said Peter. 'We could be smugglers!'

Scamper dashed in and out excitedly, dragging a long bit of seaweed behind him. The children explored the second cave and then, to their great delight, they found that rough steps in the back cave led upwards into a third cave.

'This *is* exciting!' cried Peter, climbing up, his torch throwing a bright light before him.

The third cave was small and rather smelly. The children explored it thoroughly, but they could not find anything there that they thought had anything to do with smugglers.

'We've been here a long time,' said Janet. 'And do listen to Scamper barking down there in the other cave. What's the matter with him?'

They soon knew! The tide had come right up to the first cave and was splashing inside. They were caught. They stood staring out at the great, heaving stretch of blue sea, full of dismay. . 'No w what shall we do ?' said Peter.

Suddenly Scamper splashed into the waves and swam off valiantly. 'I do believe he's gone

to fetch help,' said Janet, almost crying. 'Oh, I do hope he has!'

Scamper had. He swam right round the cliffs till he came to the sandy beach. Then he bounded along to Seaside Cottage. He barked and barked, and tried to drag Daddy out of the door.

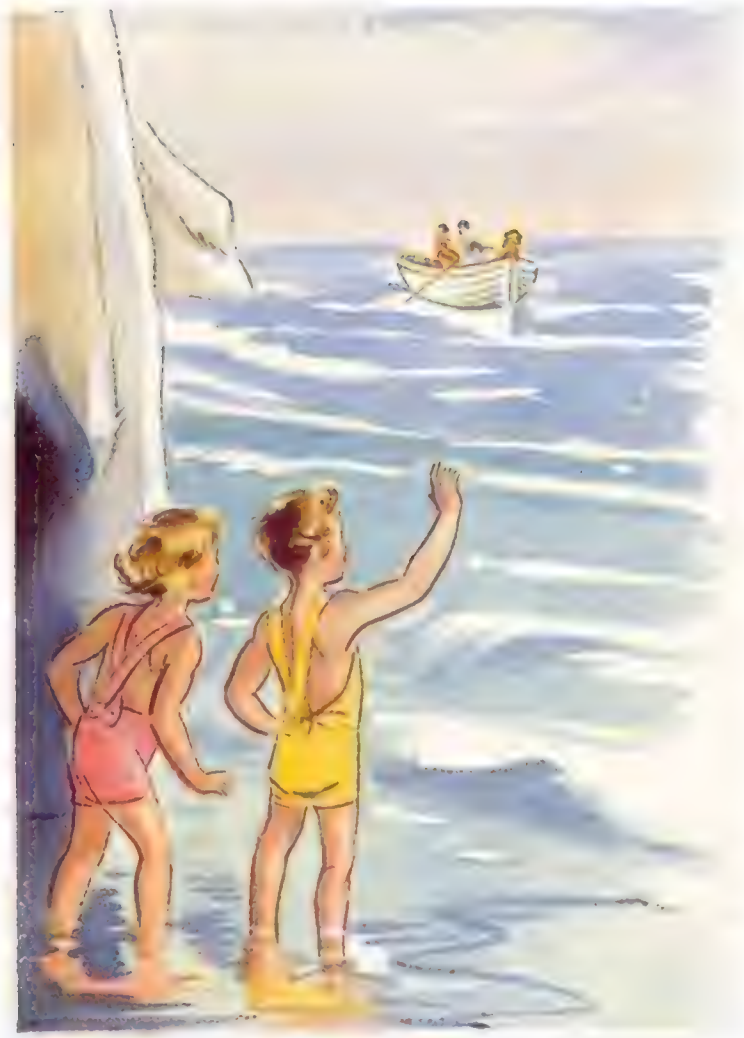
'The children are in danger!' said Mummy suddenly. 'That's what Scamper has come to say. They've gone to those caves and been caught by the tide. Oh dear!'

'Now don't worry, my dear. I'll get Jock's boat and he and I will go and get the children,' said Daddy. So off he went and very soon he, Jock and Scamper were rowing round the cliffs to the cave where the children stood, alone and frightened. Scamper barked to them.

Daddy and Jock got the children into the boat. Scamper licked them madly. He was so pleased to have saved them. Janet hugged him.

'Darling Scamper! Daddy, isn't he wonder❖ful ? He knew we were in danger and he fetched you.'

Daddy had a few words to say about foolish children who didn't remember the tides. 'And



you especially, Peter, ought to have been more careful,' he said, 'because a brother must always look after his sister. I don't feel very pleased with you.'

But everyone was pleased with Scamper, and you should have seen the dinner Granny put down for him that night.



At Seaside Cottage

Part 3

BEFORE two weeks had gone by Peter and Janet could both swim six strokes. Grandpa was very proud of them both.

'Now, I must keep my word and let you take me on the steamer,' he said. 'Shall we go this afternoon?'

'Oh yes!' cried the children. So that after-noon they walked to the little pier where small red steamers came six times a day.

'There comes the steamer now!' cried Peter in excitement. 'Look, Grandpa. It's puffing away like anything. Will it turn, round at the pier?'

'She will turn before she arrives at the pier,' said Grandpa, 'and back up against it, till she's sideways on.'

They got their tickets and went to wait for the little red steamer. Before they could get on,



a lot of people got off. Then Grandpa, Peter and Janet all went on board with the other people who were waiting.

'Oh, it's a lovely steamer!' cried Peter, exploring every corner. 'Look, Janet, you can even go downstairs in it.'

'Yes, that goes down to the cabin,' said Grandpa. 'In case it rains, you know. But it won't rain, so we'll sit up here on deck. Come along.'

What fun it was when the steamer started off. It gave a deep hoot that made the children jump, and then set off quite fast over the sea.

'It's going to Pride Bay!' said Peter. 'That's a big place, isn't it, Grandpa? Is it as nice as Sandy Cove?'

'Well, you'll see,' said Grandpa. 'Now look how small our little pier is. We've come quite a long way already.'

'It's very windy, isn't it?' said Janet.

'Oh, isn't the sea blue? Look, Grandpa, is that Pride Bay far away over there? It looks so very small.'

But it didn't look small when they got to it. It

was a big seaside town. The beach was so crowded with people that the children could hardly see any sand. There was a lot of noise, too, bands playing, men shouting and children yelling.

'I don't like this,' said Janet. 'It's too big and noisy, and isn't the beach dirty? I like Sandy Cove best, Grandpa. Shall we just have an ice-cream somewhere and catch the next steamer back? It's the steamer-ride I like, not the place we've come to!'

'That's just what / feel!' said Grandpa, looking quite pleased. 'Sandy Cove for me every time. Look, we'll go and get an ice-cream over there, up on the cliff, and we can watch for the next steamer to come.'

So they had an ice-cream up on the cliff, where it was windy and fresh. Pride Bay was a beautiful bay, blue and calm. It was fun to watch the little red steamer they had come on, go puffing away, and another one come to meet it from somewhere up the coast.

They went down to the crowded beach to get to the pier. Pierrots were playing and singing



to the people. Ice-cream men did a fine trade. A string of little donkeys stood patiently waiting for riders.

'Let's have just one ride!' said Peter.

So they had a ride, and even Grandpa did too. The three donkeys galloped along the sands and back again. Then it was time to go to the pier to wait for the little red steamer.

It was lovely to arrive back at Sandy Cove again. Granny, Mummy, Daddy and Scamper were at the little pier to meet them. Scamper flung himself at them as if he hadn't seen them for a whole year!

'It was a lovely trip,' said Janet, 'but we *are* glad to come back to Sandy Cove. It's the nicest seaside place there is!'

'It's a pity we've ever got to leave it,' said Peter. 'Oh Mummy, is our holiday soon coming to an end? I shall be so sad if it is.'

'I'm afraid it is,' said Mummy. 'We must go the day after tomorrow.'

'Oh dear! Not so soon as that!' cried Janet. 'Oh Mummy, we must collect heaps of shells, and some ribbon seaweed too, to take back -and can we take some crabs ?'

'Oh no,' said Mummy. 'Not crabs. They wouldn't live away from the sea. But you can hunt for shells and take some nice seaweed back, if you like.'

'Only one more whole day,' said Janet, as they got into bed that night. 'Isn't it sad, Peter? Why do lovely holidays like this go so quickly?'

'We must do simply *everything* tomorrow,' said Peter. 'We must dig, and paddle, and bathe, and shrimp, and go out in Jock's boat. It's the last chance we'll have!'

So on that last day the two children were very busy. They dug an enormous castle with a moat that ran down to the sea.

They paddled with Scamper and they bathed with him. Janet swam eight strokes and Peter swam nine.

They went out in Jock's boat for an hour and saw him take up some of his lobster pots with lobsters in them.

They went to the rock pools and sailed Peter's boat - but this time they brought it safely back with them!

They got their fishing nets and shrimped



when the tide was low, and they caught more shrimps than ever before. They found a box for shells and filled it. And they both found a beautiful long piece of ribbon seaweed to take home and hang up to tell the weather.

'When it's dry you'll know the weather will be fine. When it's wet, the weather will be rainy or cloudy,' said Granny.

At last the time came to go. Granny and Grandpa went to see them off in the train. Scamper was sad too, and he put his tail right down.

'I don't like letting you go,' said Granny. 'I really don't. I don't know what I shall do with♦out you all.'

'I shall only let them go if they promise me something,' said Grandpa suddenly.

'What?' asked the children.

'Promise me you'll come back next year in the summer holidays,' said Grandpa. 'Do you promise?'



'Oh *yes*, of *course* we promise!' cried the children, as the guard waved his flag.

'We'll come back next year. Good-bye, Granny; good-bye, Grandpa; good-bye, Sandy Cove!'



Love from

Enid Blyton
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